

NOTES ON SNAKES COLLECTED IN CANNANORE
FROM 5TH NOVEMBER 1903 TO 5TH AUGUST 1904.

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Family TYPHLOPIDÆ.

TYPHLOPS ACUTUS.

This snake is called by the Malabaris "Kooroodan pambou," "blind-snake," which name is also applied to the Cæcilian *Uroæotyphlus oxyurus*. A single adult specimen was brought to me alive on the 2nd December. It wriggled vigorously in my grasp, but made no attempt to bite me.

Family BOIDÆ.

Sub-family BOINÆ.

Eryx conicus.

An extremely common snake, called by the natives "Mandalee." This name is also given by them to Russell's viper, from which they are apparently unable to distinguish it. They are extremely afraid of it, and many have been the entreaties I have received not to handle it. I have had many in captivity, but it is an uninteresting, sluggish reptile, and does not thrive well, usually refusing food. It will sometimes snap at an offending object, but as often takes little or no notice of it, and will even refuse to retract its nose from the glass of its cage when drummed against. Its courage and strength are exemplified by its power of overcoming full-grown squirrels (*Sciurus palmarum*). On two occasions I had captor and victim brought in to me, and one of these snakes only measured 1 foot 4½ inches! I have often wondered what tactics it can adopt to effect the capture of these very active and comparatively large creatures. These are not the only instances known to me in which squirrels have fallen a prey to this snake. One specimen had swallowed a large frog (*Rana tigrina*). Another of 9½ inches had eaten some small mammal, too digested to identify. It kills its victims by crushing, and I have always found them dead before the snake has begun swallowing. It has a habit, like many other snakes, of crouching or pressing itself to the ground when molested, and this is most noticeable in the hinderpart of the body. Its movements are slow, and it cannot be got to hasten; on the contrary, if worried, sulks, and remains coiled and stationary. I obtained 36 specimens. The sex is not recorded in 18, and of the remainder 9 were males and 9 females; 15 were obtained in